

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**NSTEP<sup>®</sup> SLOGAN CONTEST EDUCATES YOUNG BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL PLAYERS  
ABOUT THE DANGERS OF TOBACCO USE**  
**Eleven-year-old from New Jersey Wins Trip to Little League Baseball World Series**

CHICAGO, Aug. 23, 2011 — Oral Health America's NSTEP<sup>®</sup> (National Spit Tobacco Education Program) announced the winner of its annual slogan contest today, and encouraged young baseball and softball players to talk to their coaches and parents about tobacco addiction and the health risks of using tobacco products, including spit and smokeless tobacco.

This year's slogan contest winner is Louie Lafakis, a 11-year-old player with the Basking Ridge (N.J.) Little League, whose submission, "Make a great play...throw tobacco away," sends a clear message that tobacco has no place in the ballpark.

"We are proud and thrilled not only by the fact that Lou's slogan was chosen over 465 submissions but more importantly that he felt a profound need to convey his disdain for tobacco use. We pray that this mindset stays with him for the rest of his life and that he can encourage others to avoid the evils of tobacco use," said Louie's parents, John and Julie Lafakis.

Louie's slogan is featured on a pin designed by NSTEP and distributed at the Little League Baseball World Series in South Williamsport, PA. Louie will receive a monetary award, a trip to the event with his family, and an on-field award ceremony.

According to a recent public opinion survey commissioned by Oral Health America, most Americans (62%) are equally concerned about cigarette use and chewing tobacco, and nearly half (48%) of younger dads aged 18-34 say they are *more* concerned about smokeless, chewing tobacco, and dip than cigarettes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance Survey found that 15% of U.S. high school boys were current smokeless tobacco users in 2009 – a 36 percent increase from 2003.

"Little League is pleased to be a part of helping educate Little League players about the risks associated with the use of spit tobacco," Stephen D. Keener, President and Chief Executive Officer of Little League Baseball and Softball, said. "We hope that by participating in the slogan contest we help increase awareness for Little League players, coaches and their parents. We thank Oral Health America and commend them on NSTEP's efforts."

NSTEP works with Little League International to educate families about the health risks of spit tobacco use, including oral cancer, gum disease, tooth decay, and nicotine addiction. During the 11-Day Little League Baseball World Series, NSTEP provides tobacco and health education to tens of thousands of young baseball and softball players and their families.

Oral Health America connects communities with resources to increase access to care, education and advocacy for all Americans, especially those most vulnerable. To find out more, visit [www.oralhealthamerica.org](http://www.oralhealthamerica.org). NSTEP's presence at the Little League World Series is made possible with support from Delta Dental of California ([www.deltadentalins.com](http://www.deltadentalins.com)).